

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-01
DHA-02 SY-05 FBIE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 JUSE-00
/049 W

----- 111146 /44

P R 131500Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8176
INFO AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CGEN, SOPN, PFOR, NI
SUBJECT: SELF-PROCLAIMED FUGITIVE FROM U.S. MURDER CHARGE

1. FEATURE INTERVIEW APPEARED IN /SUNDAY TIMES/ DECEMBER 12, WITH
MAN WHO CALLS HIMSELF REXFORD SMITH, NOW PURPORTEDLY IN NIGERIA,
WHO CLAIMS HE JUMPED BAIL IN U.S. ON CHARGE OF CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT
MURDER. PICAESQUE TALE OF WOE THAT "SMITH" TELLS SEEMS UNBELIEVABLE
TO EMBASSY; REQUEST CHECK WITH FBI AND NEW YORK CITY POLICE TO
DETERMINE
IF SUCH A PERSON AS "SMITH" EXISTS, IF HE IS WANTED, AND IF EXTRADITI
ON
IS GOING TO BE REQUESTED.

2. MAN CALLING HIMSELF REXFORD SMITH SAYS HE WAS BORN FEBRUARY
20, 1956, IN NEW YORK CITY, OF JAMAICAN PARENTS. HE CLAIMS THAT AS
A YOUTH HE LIVED IN JAMAICA, LOS ANGELES, AND OXFORD, ENGLAND, HIS
FATHER, PROFESSOR MICHAEL SMITH, BEING A LECTURER IN AFRICAN
STUDIES. SAYS HE GRADUATED FROM CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, ENGLAND,
WITH B.SC. IN CHEMICAL ENGINEERING: MARCH 1974. HE RETURNED TO
U.S. TO LOOK FOR WORK, AND LEARNED "THAT THE AMERICAN ARMY
NEEDED ENGINEER TO WORK AT ITS AMMUNITION CENTER IN NEW YORK."
AFTER SIX-MONTH COURSE AT "DALLAS MILITARY ACADEMY" HE RECEIVED
COMMISSION IN ARMY AS LIEUTENANT, LATE 1974.

3. "SMITH" CLAIMS THAT HE AND FAMILY WENT TO UK FOR DELAYED
PRESENTATION OF HIS DEGREE, AND THAT "FOUR DAYS TO CONVOCATION,"
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ON APRIL 25, 1975, HIS MOTHER, FATHER AND SISTER WERE ALL KILLED

IN HIGHWAY ACCIDENT BETWEEN LONDON AND NOTTINGHAM. "SMITH" THEN RETURNED TO NEW YORK, AND A COUSIN NAMED BARBARA, ABOUT 20 YEARS OLD AND A STUDENT AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, CAME TO STAY IN HIS FLAT. "BEING FEMALE, BLACK AND A POLITICAL ACTIVIST, SHE NO DOUBT ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY AGENTS WHO MUUT HAVE CONSIDERED HERE A SECURITY RISK."

4. ON AUGUST 23, 1976, "SMITH" CLAIMS HE WAS TOLD THAT SOME WHITE MEN WITH GUNS HAD ABDUCTED BARBARA AND WERE HOLDING HER NEAR TIMES SQUARE. " I WAS DRESSETS JYKQUTARY UNIFORM AT THE TIME AND HAD A LOADED PISTOL IN MY HOLSTER." IN AUTO CHASE AND GUN BATTLE THROUGH TIMES SQUARE (" HERE I WAS BEING SHOT AT BY SIX WHITE MEN WHEN ALL I WAS TRYING TO DO WAS TO FIND OUT WHY MY COUSIN WAS BIENG ABDUCTED"), THE WHITE GUNMEN KILLED THREE INNOCENT BYSTANDERS AND "SMITH" KILLED TWO OF THE WHITES. "SMITH" CLAIMS HE WAS ARRAIGNED ON CHARGES OF "CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MURDER." "YOU SEE, BROTHER, I'M BLACK AND WHEN A BLACK COMMITS A CRIME IN AMERICA THE WHITS TRY TO MAKE IT SEEM LIKE NOTHING BAD AS THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED BEFORE. AFTER A FEW DAYS I WAS RELEASED ON BAIL . . . I SLIPPED OUT OF THE U.S. ON SEPTEMBER 6, 1976 BY AIR AND LANDED IN LONDON A FEW HOURS LATER . . .ON TUESDAY (SIC) SEPTEMBER 9. . . . I LEFT HEATHROW . . .FOR LAGOS."

5. "SMITH" CLAIMS TO HAVE LOST ALL HIS TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, MONEY AND PERSONAL RECORDS IN BURGLARY OF HOUSE WHERE HIS IS STAYING. "MY SITUATION . . . IS SO DESPERATE THAT I AM CONSIDERING GIVING MYSELF UP AND GOING BACK TO THE U.S. TO FACE THE INJUSTICE THAT WAS TO BE METED OUT TO ME. . ."

6. COMMENT: STORY SEEMS A COMPOUND OF YOUTHFUL NIGERIAN FANTASIES -- ANGELA DAVIS, EARNING A CAMBRIDGE DEGREE, GUNPLAY IN THE BIG CITY--PLUS APPEAL FOR SYMPATHY FROM A DESTITUTE. /SUNDAY TIMES/ WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE REACHED NEW HEIGHTS IN PRINTING THIS ONE. NEVERTHELESS "SMITH" DOES CLAIM TO BE WANTED FOR A FELONY IN U.S. EMBASSY MAY HAVE OCCASION TO MEET WITH /TIMES/ EDITORS THIS WEEK ON ANOTHER MATTER--/TIMES INTERNATIONAL/ BEGINS SERIES MONDAY ON "U.S. AND SOUTH AFRICAN SECRET PLANS TO CONTROL NAMIBIA"-- AND IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO USE "SMITH" ITEM AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF IRRESPONSIBLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JOURNALISM ON PART OF /TIMES/ EMPLOYEES.
EASUM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ALLEGATIONS, EXTRADITABLE CRIMES, CITIZENSHIP STATUS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAGOS13859
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760459-0030
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761249/aaaabqba.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUN 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by ElyME>; RELEASED <27 JUN 2005 by blochd0>; APPROVED <05 JUL 2005 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SELF-PROCLAIMED FUGITIVE FROM U.S. MURDER CHARGE
TAGS: CGEN, SOPN, PFOR, NI, (SMITH, REXFORD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006